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Completion of
Coleridge's
Christabel

EDNA WAHLERT



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Completion of Coleridge's CHRISTABEL

BY
EDNA WAHLERT

A Story of Destiny and Peace

“* * * that there is no thought, no power, no spell, no craft, wherewith to turn aside the feet of Destiny,— * * * the Destiny where the soul is deaf and blind.”



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To
DAVID
And All His Million Brothers.



Completion of Coleridge's

CHRISTABEL

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FOREWORD.

To venture a "Completion" of the *Christabel* of Coleridge is, in truth, a bold undertaking. And yet, it was but love for the beginning of it, for its medieval atmosphere of beauty and horror, for the poignantly vague suggestiveness of its simplicity, for the primitive dread of the Unknown in its elusive melody, that, rather than any boldness, has called it forth.

I have endeavored to preserve the popular ballad tone and diction of the original, and to keep to the four-time accented line. Otherwise, the Completion does not follow along definitely laid plans of Coleridge's design, nor even partly so. For what Coleridge himself has told us of the entire work is not wholly illuminating. I mean this Completion to be the completion of a *story* and not the completion of an allegory with moral and philosophy previously mapped by Coleridge,—a completion of a story of *Destiny and Peace*,

E. W.

Synopsis of Parts One and Two of Coleridge's
"Christabel."

Christabel, a young girl of noble birth, leaves her father's castle late one April night to pray, in the forest, for her lover, far away in the Holy Land. There she hears a low moan, and, turning, beholds a woman, wondrously fair—a woman who begs for succor, and tells how she has been torn from her father's hall by a band of wicked men, tied upon a white palfrey, and driven like the wind until released at this place. Christabel gladly takes this maiden, Geraldine, to her father's home, but as her sire, Sir Leoline, is not well, and all her household sleeps, she asks Geraldine to share her own couch for the night. At the threshold of the castle, Geraldine sinks upon the ground from weariness, and Christabel carries her across.

When they are at length alone in Christabel's own chamber, Christabel suddenly becomes seized with an unholy fear. For the woman, who had seemed so beautiful to her in the forest, now appears to possess a form and shape fearsome and hideous as that of a serpent.

Yet in the morning she seems again the beautiful Lady Geraldine. And when Christabel leads her to her father, Geraldine reveals herself as the daughter of his oldest friend, Roland de Vaux, of Tryermaine. Be-

tween Leoline and Tryermaine there had been a quarrel, but Leoline now sends his bard, Bracy, to the home of Tryermaine to bid him come to fetch his daughter and to renew the old friendship.

Christabel continues to know, at intervals, an awful fear of this (to all other eyes) beauteous maiden, while Leoline becomes infatuated with her, and seems as if fallen under a spell.

PART THE THIRD

Part the Third.

All day long Sir Leoline
Talked with the Lady Geraldine,
And led her through the high dark halls
Of the castle's space, and through the rooms
Hung with olden tapestries
From Turkish and Italian looms.
In some there hung upon the walls
Rare paintings from a master's brush,
Corinthian brass, and coats of mail,
Trophies of war from long years' sail.
As of a forest's depth, a hush
The vast castle hems;
And through the quiet Sir Leoline
Led the fair lady, Geraldine,
Showing her all the beauties rare
Of his stately home. Here and there,
In some quaint nook, or on the stair
They stopped to talk. With never a care
Or thought for Lady Christabel,
The Baron has many a story to tell
Of wonderful deeds that at home or abroad,
In war and peace,
Were connected with this mace or that shining sword;

Of bronzes, mosaics, and rare embossed plate,
Of vessels and cameos, helmet and shield,
Banners and cross-bow, javelins and gems,
And lances that long lines of barons wield.

And when from relating he would cease
He gazed then enrapt on the lady fair,
Drinking the gold of her vivified hair,
The snow of her skin, her deep eye's fire,
Her body's slim. Filled with desire
To protect her, the sire of Christabel
Became, and he vowed, again and again,
That she, the daughter of Tryermaine,
His former and always dearest friend,
Would, so long as his head could bend,
Find in him a faithful friend,
A helper in woe or in distress
Who would joy at her least happiness.

He led her through his whole estate
While all the vassals stood agape.
Had anyone thought Sir Leoline,
Who long in years was past his prime,

Possessed the strength to wander so
Through myriad avenues, high and low,
Even though it chanced to be
His lot to walk with such a bright lady?
For he was old and had long not been well,
The aged sire of Christabel.
—Jesu Maria, shield her well!

And what of Lady Geraldine?
Holding up her train so fine
She glided beside the knightly man
As a swaying flower. Tell who can
Why such beauty e'er was fashioned
To dwell upon one woman—
Such beauty, hardly human,
Fired as from magic—yet not impassioned
More than a sweet pure woman should be.
Her wine-red lips in half-parted smile
Breathed faint thanks every little while
To her kind host
For serving thus a maiden lost
In a strange land at the dead of night.
And she rebreathed her sorry plight
While the aged Knight dropped many a tear
To think that any maid so fair
Should have suffered as had this lady here.

He touched the moving tresses of her hair,
And while she blushed with charming grace,
A blush that mantled her cream'd white face
As a dawn-flushed mountain peak is flamed
Into magic by the colors of the sun,
All her charms he named, and named
With courtly courtesy. They shun
All talk or thought of Christabel.
—O Jesu Maria, guard her well.

But where is the daughter of Leoline?
The Baron gave no thought.
The Baron had not sought.
All things now were to him as naught
Save Lady Geraldine,
Swaying near him as a zephyr's rhyme.

Then where is Lady Christabel?
The hardest heart had need to swell
To look upon that fair lady
Who but yesternight knew naught put peace
And joy of living, and youth's beauty.
Now peace seems made of ropes of sands,
And the loom of life of shadows' bands.

Her throat is dry as an Autumn leaf;
Her pulse is tense with an awful fear,
And down her cheek there falls a tear
Of desire holy (with pious belief!)
To cleanse her soul from all sin,
So that no evil might dwell therein.
“For surely,” so did reason she,
“I must be wicked. Or else He
Would never send this fear to me.”

Then down upon her knees she fell,
The lovely Lady Christabel.
She gazed upon the cross—the cross
—Jesu Maria, shield her well!
She kissed her beads, she kissed the cross,
While her trembling lips low murmured then
A prayer so soft as soft still rain.
—Mary, Mary, Mother of men,
Mother, all that is pure and mild,
Mary, Mary, Mother of men,
Protect thy child!

And this is the prayer the Lady prayed
As to her breast the cross she laid.

Once I dreamed of a Garden,
I, the Lady Christabel.
I came upon the Warden
Of the flowery, shadowed dell.
He was tall and straight and mild.
His eyes shown as angels' eyes.
His robe was white as memories
Of a little, little child.
I asked him for a flower, as I stood beside his gate,
And silently he took my hand
And led me through his garden land.
And there were roses and lilies tall,
And colored blossoms low and small
That made me think of angels' faces
Or quiet peaceful altar-places.
He held my hand, the keeper tall,
And through the paths and along the wall
He led me tenderly.
—Mary, Mother, have pity on me!—
When we came to the gate again
I asked once more
Of the Beautiful One in angel's white
For a flower from his garden store.
He smiled—he smiled then.
'Which wouldst thou have?' he said to me.
But I vaguely thought he looked pityingly,
As were I in some sorry plight.

I saw the flower I wanted most,

Saw it through all the rainbow host
Peeping from a lowly bed.
My eye and desire were to it led.
'Twas a pansy, velvet white,
Velvet as a child's soft lips,
Quiet as a loved one's lips.
As a bird that dips through twilight gray
I saw it sway
In a golden shadow, Mary, Mother.
'That I wish'; I showed it him;
'That soft white thing; that, and no other.'
Over the face of the Gardener passed
A film as gray as a far ship's mast
At evening. His eyes welled dark
With a sadness it seemed;
There was a tear in his eye, I dreamed.
Mary, Mary, Mother of men,
He put out his hand—when hark!
There come from without the garden a moan
As I have heard but once since then,
Mary, Mary, Mother of men,
But once—last night—
When it moaned near as near could be,
And I saw beside the old oak tree
The fairest, fairest, fair lady.
The gardener's lips trembled at the tone.
He held my hand tight.
'That is a flower of Peace,' he said,

'That pansy white in its rainbow bed,
That is a flower of Peace,' he said;
And Mary, Mother, he shook his head.

But only a short time did I fear
After I awoke, prayed Chistabel.
Mother of Christ, have I been too glad,
Too happy? Not once did leer
Before my mind a haunting fell
To mar my joy and make me sad.
Was it an omen, my flower dream?
Mary, Mother, it did not seem
That woe *could* come. I had my love—
My love—my love—How could I fear,
Or doubt God's kindness then,
Mary, Mary, Mother of men?
My life shone bright as the stars above.
Never a woe—never a tear,
Save such as was bright
With dreams of a future of love's delight.
Only joy—joy for many a year
In which to help my lord and lover,
To make life sweet as could no other;
To bear him children, to smile on him,
To brighten moments that might else be dim.

Could one wee little dream—say how—
Could it make me know that there
Would come to me in my still home's air
This gray—cold lair
Of dread that I know now—know now?
Mary, Mother, send me Peace,
Send me strength to love the best,
Think the beautiful. And leave the rest
To thee. Send me peace!
Or, if my dream was a prophetic dream
And my future's joy doth only seem
(As my brain and body now dimly see)
Then Mary, Mother, I trust in thee.

When she rose with finished prayer
She felt a strange deep quiet where
Before had been but heavy care.
“I will go to Sir Leoline,
My father dear, and Geraldine.
The day is almost done, and I
Have not with fitting courtesy
Attended on my own guest's fare.
What she will think I cannot tell
Of the rudeness of Lady Christabel.”

Forgetting the awe she had known before,
And the neglect her father had shown to her,
She passed through the house and out the door
Until she came to where they were—
Her aged sire, Sir Leoline,
Sitting beside fair Geraldine.

Conclusion to Part Third.

The bud would be a flaming rose
And flash its perfume to the sun's gold fire,
Gleam soft with beauty that no gods can tire
Or winds destroy with swift desire.

Poor little bud—never to be that rose.
The lark would soar to the blue of the sky,
And know the trembling peace of dizzy heights,
The glory of farness from world-flashed lights,
The songs that mad greed of hope excites.

Poor little lark—never to reach the sky.
The heart would love its fellow-soul,
And weave its world to understanding peace
Of kindness, where all strifes cease
That hunger for our woe's release.

Poor, sad, small heart—never to reach thy goal!

PART THE FOURTH

Part the Fourth.

The setting sun streamed shadows short
From the yellowing west, dimming the court
And the water's edge where sat they two
Under a tree of drooping yew—
The aged Baron, Sir Leoline,
And the fair bright Geraldine,
Ere twilight changed and died.
As she drew near,
“How could I,” thought then Christabel,
“Have been otherwise than pleased most well
That such a lady fair and sweet
Should sit at my dear father's feet
And make him happy and forget
The pains of age and time's dull fret?”
Christabel drew near.
She stood quite still, and smiled a smile
Full of joy for a little while
That her dear father, Sir Leoline,
Should be so happy with Geraldine.
“Father, dear,” she softly said—
Her father did not turn his head—
“And lady fair—our welcome guest,
More welcome because of your distress—
I have come here but to tell
That I, the Lady Chistabel”——
Not one word more came from her throat;

Her voice grew hoarse as a jangled note,
And her heart within her loud did swell.
—Jesu Maria, shield her well!

For all she had spoken, her father ne'er stirred;
For all she addressed him he heard not a word,
But continued to talk to Geraldine.
Oh, what has befallen Sir Leoline?

The lady guest, ah, she has heard,
And she turns on Christabel her eyes cold-wild
(Oh, Mary, Mother, protect thy child!)—
Turned her eyes on the lady fair,
While slowly fell back her livid hair;
Her eyes where gleamed the gleam
(That since Christabel's prayer had seemed only a
dream —)
The gleam that made them narrow and green.
Narrow and green as ne'er was seen
But in a serpent's head, I ween.
No word more came to the sweet maid's mouth;
She stood there silent and parched as drought.
Held with that small and glittering eye,
A knowledge seizes Christabel,

That turned her weak till she almost fell
In a swoon on the ground at her father's feet,
On the sward beside the marble seat.
See! look at the white of the lady's arm!
—Mary, Mother, keep us from harm!
Christabel sees the lady's white skin,
And with a shudder her breath draws in.
For the skin that was white and of samite's sheen,
The skin of the lady's soft left arm,
That lies quite close to the Baron's arm,
It seems to shrink, it seems to quiver
Like a shadowed black in some still river!
It shriveled up like a dead thing's skin,
Like a demon's skin, like a devil's skin.
See how it quivers—yellow—thin—
While Christabel's gladness flew from within
Her heart that prayer had come to relieve,
That now had strength not even to grieve.
All she could do was to stand there still,
In the twilight gloom. A whip-poor-will
Gave one low cry.
That hideous glistening eye!
Christabel could not move or think.
But swayed as a flower o'er a river's brink,
And saw, without able to utter a moan
Or even the faintest, lowest tone,
That her father had fallen under a spell.
He had no ear for anyone but the lady here.

“*Lady?*—Mary, what is she?
O Mary, Mother, have pity on me!”
Breathed the heart of Christabel
As she watched the shriveled, ugly skin,
And the eye now bright and now snake-dim,
That her father did not, or could not, see;
“Mary, Mother have pity on me!”

Tu-whit—tu-whoo,
The first owl screeched—tu-whoo.
A black cloud flaunts long ribbons o’er
The duly colored heaven.
What cry is that!—The owl wails more
Then were it midnight even.

Who comes running here so swift?

A sudden peace comes over her.
’Tis a child that comes—one of the vassal’s boys—
A dreamer child of no child joys.
Often when alone he had been known
To lift to the tall trees or the far-off skies
His seeing dreamer’s eyes,

And seem to see what lies beyond—
Things that few men e'er have found.

Now his eyes are wild. His lips tremble.

No fears dissemble

That Lady Christabel knew before!

Down at the Baron's feet he fell.

He paid no heed to Geraldine

Nor even glanced at Christabel,

But cried as with a heart full sore:

"I must tell you, Sir Leoline!

There has come a fearful woe

To your good house. Ah, *do* you know?

Feel the awful hush that now

Fills the trees! On that bough—

See—hear—the owl calls dismally.

All the gold sun's dying fire

Is gray—gray—gray—O sire

Of Lady Christabel, not I

Should come to you, but a Voice came—a Voice,

All within me urged—I had no choice.

Last night the river leaped its bank,

And flooded the meadows till the grain all sank

In the watery lines that drank it up

As if 'twere a pebble in a cup.

This morning the milk that the white goats gave

Killed all who drank it save

Myself. Of Yesterday's living now serfs are dead.

Oh, Lord Baron, turn your head!

But the worst I have not yet said,
Though I would tell you so you can know
That to your house has come this woe.
Help it! This is worst,
What I tell you now.

Hear the owl screech—That bough—
That one, beneath the long, black cloud—
Oh, I cannot bear to turn!
Is it, is it my Lady's shroud?
It gnaws me like a burning worm!

I have a garden behind the wall,
A little one, but filled with flowers
That are not great and are not small,
Pure white flowers, white as snow.
Listen! When your house is happy they gleam whiter.
I have always felt that, when they seemed brighter.
Now—they—are—dead, the flowers;
The hearts of my white flowers, too.
Oh, Lord Baron, what shall I do?"

"Crazy boy," the Baron said,
"Get you home and to your bed
What can mean this folly, pray,
Come to trouble my bright day?"
Then from the shaded marble seat
The Baron rose upon his feet.

“Come with me,” to Geraldine;
“I wish naught, but my talk and thine,
And leave to gaze in your eyes of wine.
Come.” He took her hand so fair.
He led her with a stately air,
Not seeing the mystic, glittering gliut
Of her bead eyes that like cold flint
Made the child cringe low, as Christabel weak;
Made all the color leave his cheek
As he, too, saw the shriveled skin
Ugly as his young dreams of sin.

The aged Baron Sir Leoline
And the lovely Lady Geraldine
Passed from beneath the shade of the yew
And left there—cold—the trembling two.

Conclusion to Part Fourth.

There is in all the world of men
Nothing that cuts with the aching ken—
Nothing that hurts with the throes of hell
As the woe just come to Christabel
And to the little dreamer child:—
Aloneness as a stretch
Of naked, barren trees;
Aloneness as the moon on a star-cleared night-sky
Through the wash of space emptily infinite gliding,
With never a shadow even
To veer the monotony of heaven;
As the fire-fly
In a world of night-black pines,
Awakening to find but darkness,
To flit, then, in desolating search
From place to place,
In the light of its fire,
For thing of its kind, or a solace.
As the fire-fly, alone—
Alone as the last flower left in the garden,
As the wind ere it reaches the world
And the clouds to tear with its passion,
To lull with its songs—
Alone, as the last, lingering light-streak of day,
So alone, with a woe so wild
Are Christabel and the little child.

Because of this—

This is the pain they came to know,
Old as traditionary lores of men,
The doubt that there is Good,
All-wise, all-ruling, all-knowing Good,
Good to all, for all, in spite of all—Good.
This doubt came into their ken.
This is the pain they came to know.
It cometh always—to all men.

PART THE FIFTH

Part the Fifth.

The sacristan has pulled the bell,
The heavy bell, the matin bell;
But the peal can scarcely cut through
The shadowy fog that webs the castle
Of the sire of Lady Christabel.
The fog is thick, the morning gray,
And the hills that are not far away
Can not be seen upon this day.
The sacristan tolls a warning knell
That sounds through the house like a ghost's low knell.
Jesu Maria, shield us well!

The gates are thrown open! Trumpets are blown!
For Bracy the bard has now returned home!
And soon the Baron will press again
To his heart his dearest, truest friend,
Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine
The Baron stands at the castle door
And beside him Sir Roland's daughter fair
With a blood-red jewel in her hair.
And her deep eyes, grave as never before,
With desire to embrace her father again,
Her beloved sire of Tryermaine.
And Christabel—oh, where is she?

Pale as the flowers of an elder tree,
Again she sees the bosom old,
Nearly feels the bosom cold,
Sees the flesh of the lady quivering
Like the deadened flesh of an old snake's skin.
She stands there as some carven mould
And presses her hand to her bosom cold,
Trying to stifle her aching dread
And the low, dull throbbing in her head.
O tired grieving of Christabel!

The castle gates are opened wide.
Swiftly bard Bracy doth through them ride,
And singeth loudly with music sweet,
More loud than his horse's echoing feet:
"Across the Irthing flood we come,
From Knorren Moor, through Halegarth wood.
From the Baron's Scottish home.
And cometh here that Baron good!
With stately steeds and hawks for fray
With knights and esquires and men-at-arms,
With archers and all preparations to stay
At the castle here to taste its charms—
To the castle of Sir Leoline,
To fetch his daughter Geraldine!"

The castle gates are open wide;
Through the thick fog doth ride
Lord Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine
With a great array at his side—
Palfreys panting and waving plume
Are faintly seen through fog's gray gloom.
Sir Leoline goes to the foot of the stair
And holds out his hand to his old friends there.
"Welcome!" he cried, "Roland Tryermaine!
Welcome, dear friend, to my arms again!
And by my honor let me say
That I repent me of the day
When I spoke words of fierce disdain
To Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine.
You forgive me, I know well.
For my daughter, Christabel,
Can give you what you love full well—
A precious gift, a prize more fine
Than all the Empire's fairest wine."

Lord Roland grasped his friend's hand.
"I have come at thy command,"
Said he. "No happier, gladder day
Than this has come to me since long,
My friend. More, I will not say.

Lead me to thy house. All wrong
Was forgot, when I heard thy bard's song."

They ascend the stairs to the Baron's hall,
Where stand the two ladies, fair and tall.
But what is wrong with Lord Roland, pray?
He only sees fair Christabel.

—Jesu Maria, shield her well!

Geraldine standeth close to the maid,

With a smile that none can see

But Christabel, whose heart prayed.

Lord Roland does not see the shade

Of her who claims to him to be

A daughter and his name's lady.

"Welcome," breathes Christabel, "my father's friend."

(Oh, will her deep dread never end?)

Sir Leoline, with much surprise

Gathering in his kind old eyes,

Is about to speak to Roland, then,

And ask how he, he of all men,

Can pass by his daughter when

He had not seen her for many sun's rise.

She speaks! Ah me, ah me,

Nothing hears Lord Tryermaine.

He can not see the lady fell;

Thinks none is near but Christabel.

Yet the Baron hears her softly say,

"Oh, dear father, look my way."

She touches Lord Roland with her milk-white hand.

Her fingers close about his throat.
Over his face falls a long, gold strand
Of hair. That wailing note!—
Christabel shrieks with a heart-sick groan
As if the hurt had been her own.

The heralds cry!—Bard Bracy and all.
Why, oh why should this woe befall
The house of aged Sir Leoline?
Oh, rescue, quick!—fair Geraldine!
She moans—low, low—with sobbing pain.
For, see, Lord Roland of Tryermaine!
Dead he lies in his daughter's arm.
(Mary, Mother, keep us from harm.)
She, blood red and bosom white,
Holds him tight.

Christabel stands like a thing of stone.
Christabel's throat is dry as a bone.
Christabel's lips give never a moan.
She only sees on Lord Roland's neck
Two dark green spots,
Two dark, dark spots,
(No one else sees even a speck),

Dark green spots that swell and swell.
—Jesu Maria, shield us well!

Ah, but see Sir Leoline!
He gazes on the corpse with Lady Geraldine
Then trembled as a withered leaf, suddenly,
And all the light goes from his eye.

Through the gray fog
The lightning, like a saber's whiz,
Cuts the thick air.
Christabel the lady fair
Sees naught but her father's friend lying there
With two dark spots upon his throat.
Her voice can utter not one note.
Through the gray fog
The lightning like a saber's whiz
Cuts the thick air.
Christabel, the lady fair
Sees only a bosom shriveled and old,
Only a bosom dried and cold,
Only a gleam of a glittering snake-eye
Turned upon her meaningly.

The aged Leoline
Has sunken upon a chair
And passes his hand o'er his white, white hair.
His old hands tremble like a leaf,
As if he were drunk with wine.
Christabel comes to his relief,
Sinks upon her knees at his side.
Her dry lips utter not a word.
What matters that?—He would not have heard.
She presses her hands to his cold, cold lips,
She lays her head upon his hips,
And he looks down at his own sweet maid
With eyes that thick with grief are laid.
His lips moved. Could she but have prayed!
"To think that it should be my home
Where he should die—
Do for Geraldine all you can—
Poor child—oh, what a man
Is dead! Oh, what a friend had I!
And now the lady is all alone.
Love her as a sister, child.
With all your dear heart sweet and mild."

Sir Leoline's head sinks on his arm.
His hand—it is no longer warm.
No sire has now fair Christabel
To love her dearly and shield her well.

All those present make low moan.
Hark to the thunder's rumbling tone!
List to the murmur of the vassals fear;
See the fair Geraldine's falling tear.

The serfs nor vessels know what to do.
And all is wailing and murmuring low,
And a strange and sombre fear runs through
The men there. What to do?
Geraldine weeps like one forlorn.
Christabel is silent as one outworn.
Bard Bracy lifts her to her feet
And tries to comfort the lady sweet.
Lord Roland's knights would attend their dead,
But what to say to that strange lady
Who mourneth o'er him moaningly
And weepeth loud and hides her head?

Then, from the crowd in the Baron's hall
There steps from near the farthest wall
From Christabel, a pilgrim form.
He is old and bent and gray.
He is sad and strangely worn;
This pilgrim, come from far away,

Approacheth Lady Christabel,
And says what he but fain would tell.
As he neareth the lady, pale
And faint as a dying sunbeam's ray,
And as a broken reed so frail,
Lady Geraldine's body slim
Curls toward her with the curling motion
Of a crawling thing;
And her eye gleamed like a treacherous ocean.
Christabel utters a low, low moan.
The pilgrim speaks in saddened tone. .
"Lady, I fain, fain would not say
What I must speak.
But swift as I can I must away
Or else I would not make thy cheek
Whiter still with pain today.
Thou hadst a lover—a goodly knight.
This I must tell thee who mourneth now.
Thy lover dwells with a fair lady
In a far distant hot country.
He thinketh now no more on thee.
I promised the Master to tell thee this,
So thou waitest no longer for his false kiss,
Nor thy dream's fulfillment—dreams of bliss.
Forgive me. Now I must away."

A grave smile gleamed on the lady's face.
She rose in all her wearied grace,
And steadied herself a moment's space.
"But one woe more," she murmured then;
"Dust behind and mist before.
Woe cometh to the best of men."

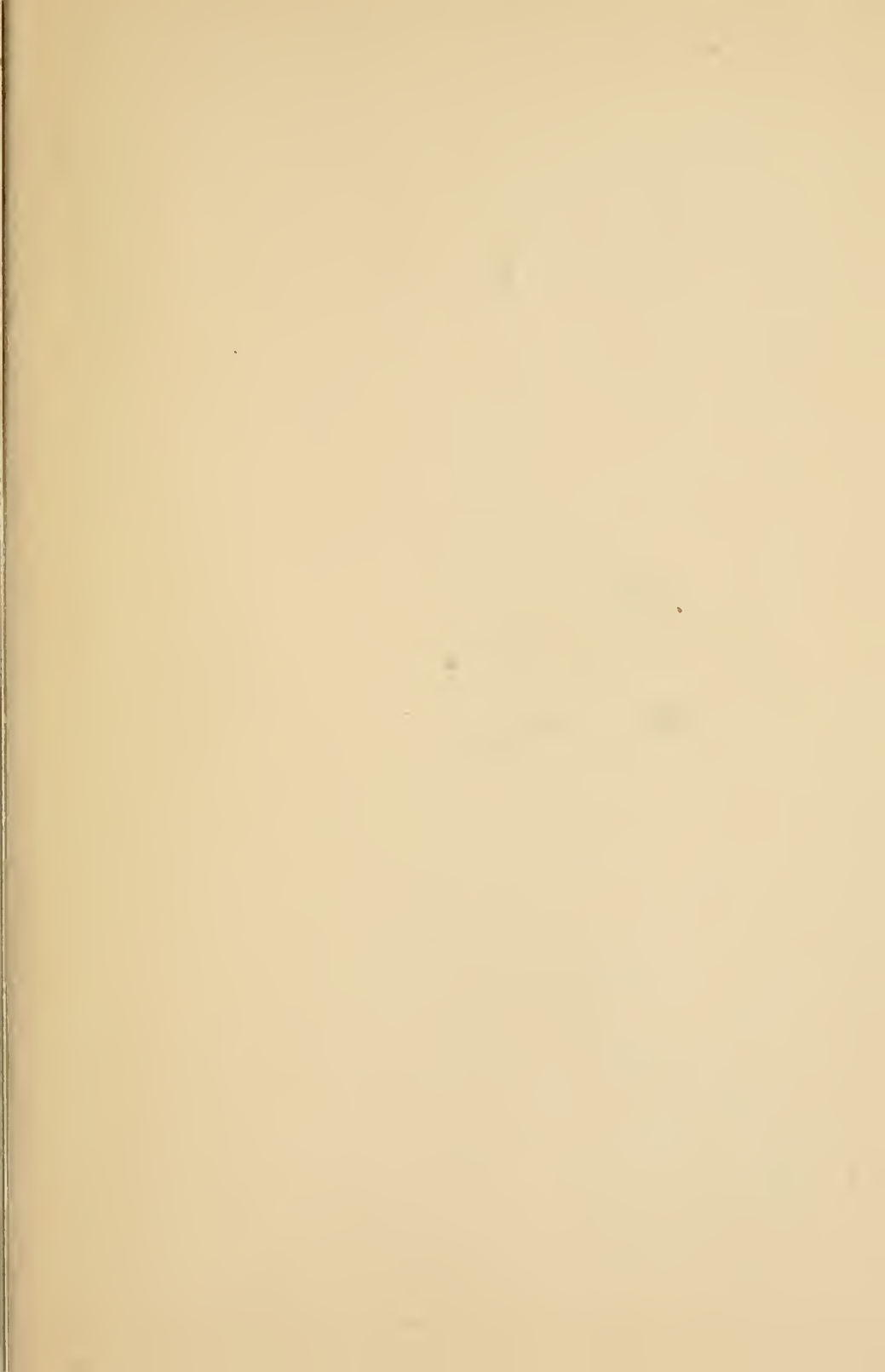
One lightning-streak cuts through the gray,
One streak that cleaveth sword-swift through.
It enters in the Baron's hall,
A light to make Orion thrall,
A mad gold light and blue.
It blazes in the great doorway,
And there is One within the flame
Tall and grave and clothed in white.
And no one there does know his name
And none before have seen his sight
Save Christabel,
(In a dream-sweet flower garden,
He had been the angel-warden).
Yea, she knows, doth Christabel.
And as she stands there in the fires,
All the fog with golden lyres
Sings to her of lost desires.
All the place sings with the rings of the lyres.
All the place flames with the shames of dead fires.
All her heart swells with the knells from desires.
Then—gone the flame and the warden
Of fair Christabel's dream-garden.

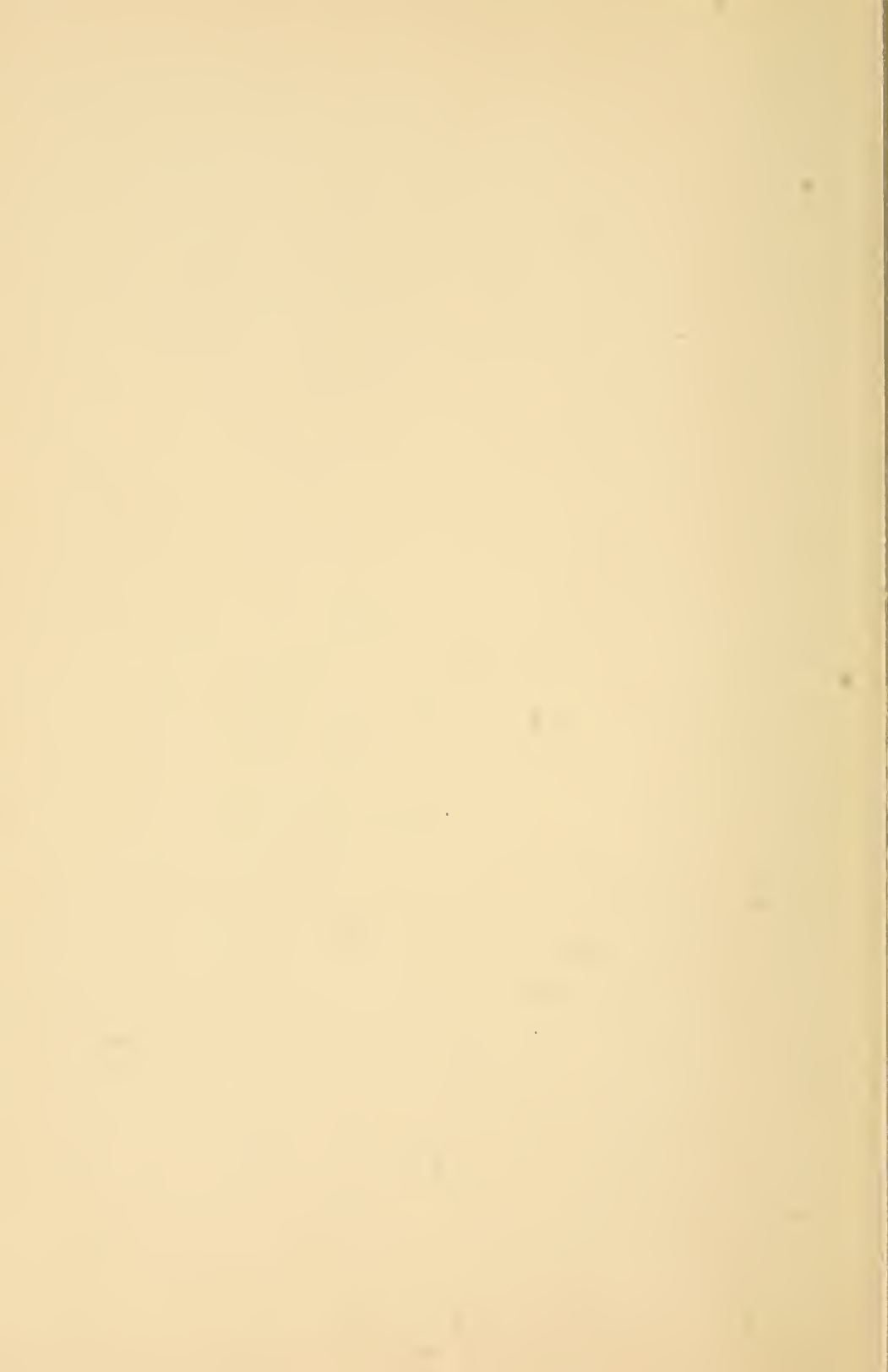
And where the light erstwhile did glow
Lies a flower, white as snow—
Velvet-white and shy and small,
There on the floor in the Baron's hall,
One small white flower for Christabel—
The flower of Peace she knows full well.

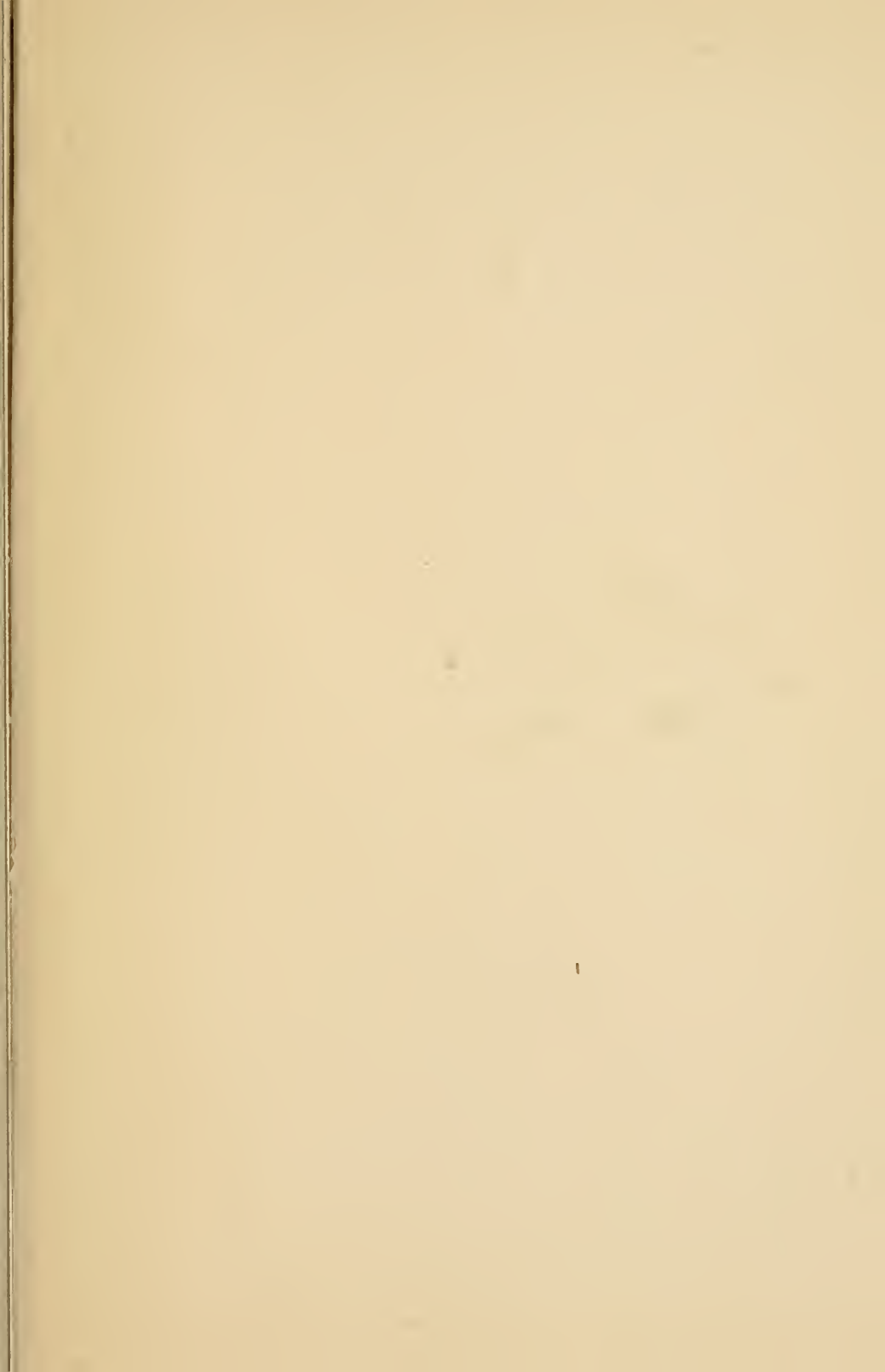
A laugh—Hark—
Cruel as a dark,
Dead hand upon a brow!
Geraldine laughs a low, cold sneer—
Christabel is too calm to fear.
She gazes now
On the wondrous fair lady
Who had moaned near the old oak tree
And been brought home from pure pity.
There is only a hideous sound,
Of a laughing, sneering demon-sound
Christabel gazes—
And as she gazes, fixed, where
Had stood the Thing that had seemed so fair,
There was only the laugh—
Only the laugh,
And the cold, fog air.

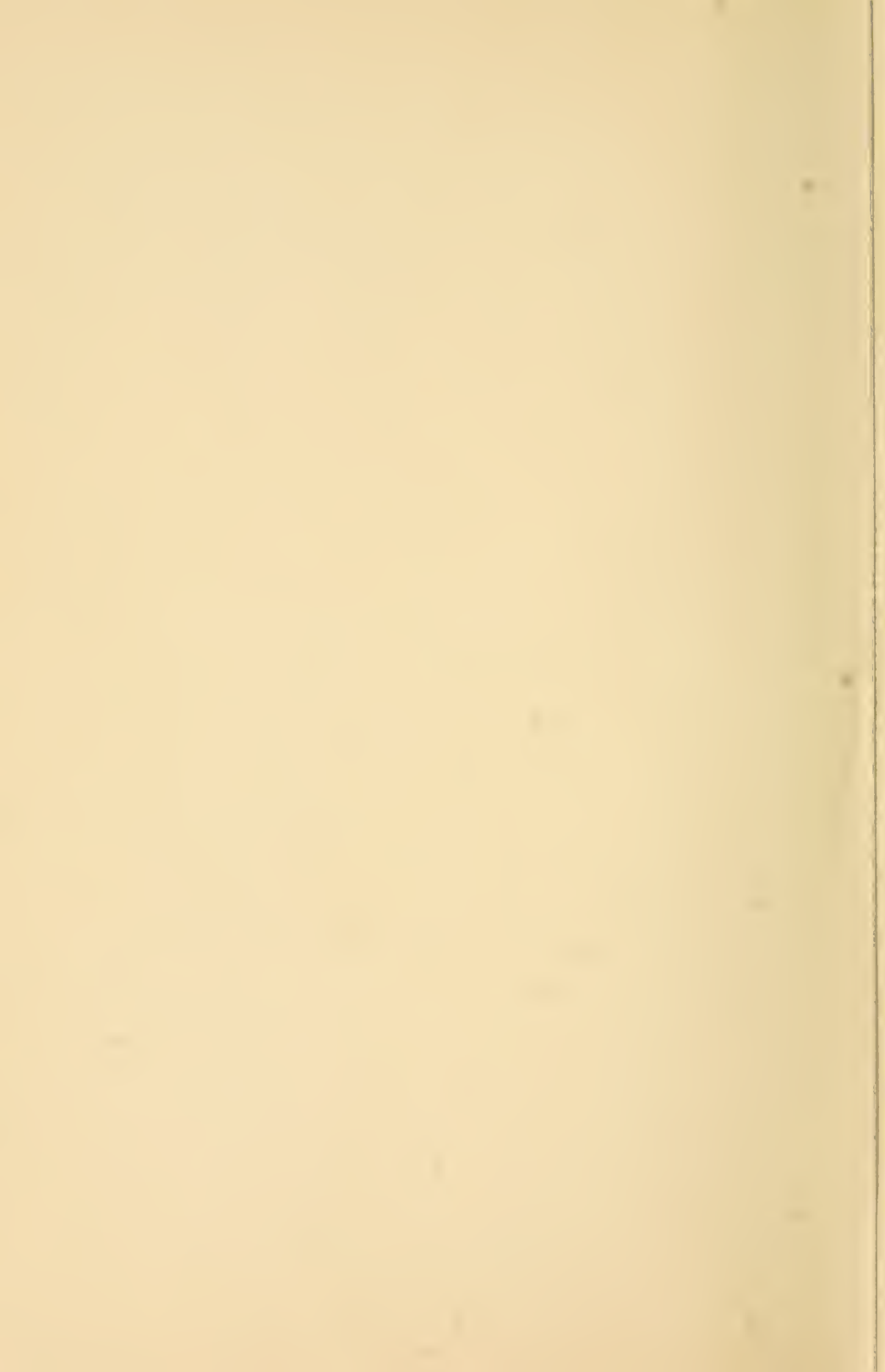
Conclusion to part the Fifth.

Why did that rose, that tall, white rose,
Of all the roses, die to-day?
Why has that mother striven in vain
To rear her children and not lay
Them under the sod, where worm and rain
Strive ever over?
Why is it sin for these lovers two, and not the rest,
To live their lives on each other's breast?
Why did this strange fate befall
The lovely Lady Christabel?
Who, ah, who can tell?
The Gods will all!





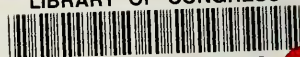




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